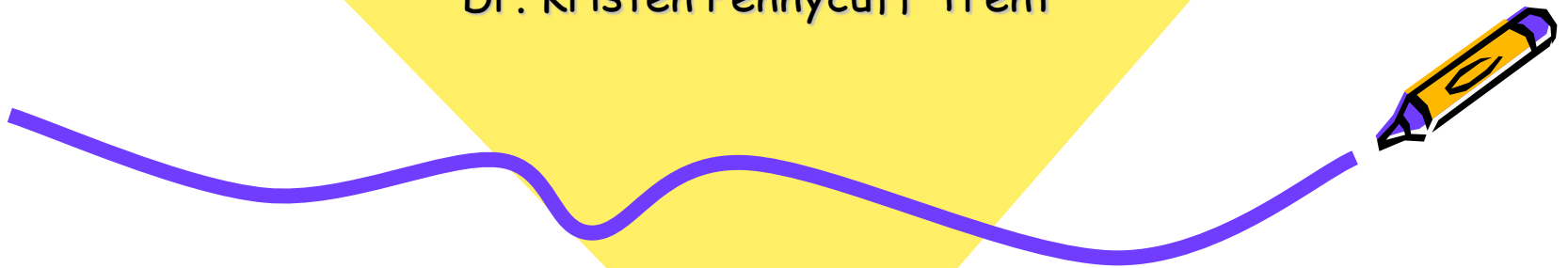




Effective Home-School-Community Relationships

Dr. Kristen Pennycuff Trent



Scenario



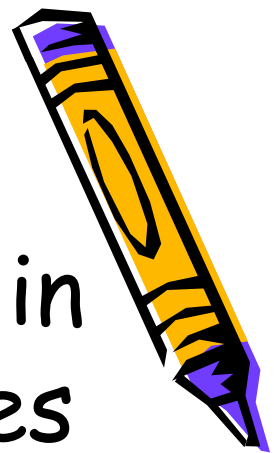
"I thought when we moved to this school district that Josi would receive an excellent education, but she is so upset over the way the children in her room are treating her that she cries when she comes home from school. I have to force her to go to school in the mornings. I wish we hadn't moved. Having a larger house just isn't worth the pain," Susan mournfully told her friend, Elizabeth. "What's going on?" Elizabeth asked. "The school just doesn't care about my child," Susan said. "I've talked with the principal several times, and I go visit every week and talk with the teacher, but she doesn't respond to my concerns at all. Miss Block, her homeroom teacher, thinks it is just natural for children to have a hard time in a new school. I think the children pick on Josi because she is small and defenseless, but Miss Block insists that Josi stands up for herself and just complains because she wants attention. She thinks Josi enjoys this attention. Oh, she also says that her self-esteem in the new school is not strong yet and that she doesn't have any friends, but that will come if we just let the children work it out for themselves." "That attitude must really be hard on you and Josi." "It makes me angry!" Susan's voice trembled. "I think that the principal and teacher hate me and my child."



"That responsibility begins not in our classrooms, but in our homes and communities. It's the family first that instills the love of learning in a child."

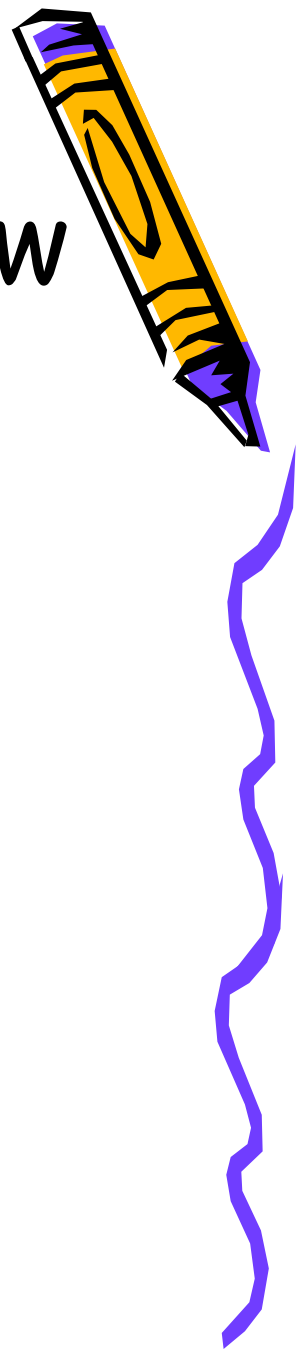
President Barack Obama

(State of the Union 2011: Winning the Future)



Chapter Five Overview

- Parental Attitudes
- Roles
- Ways to enhance relationships
- School activities and resources
- Teacher communication
- Parents as Partners
 - Contributions at Home
 - Building Family Strength
 - School Volunteers



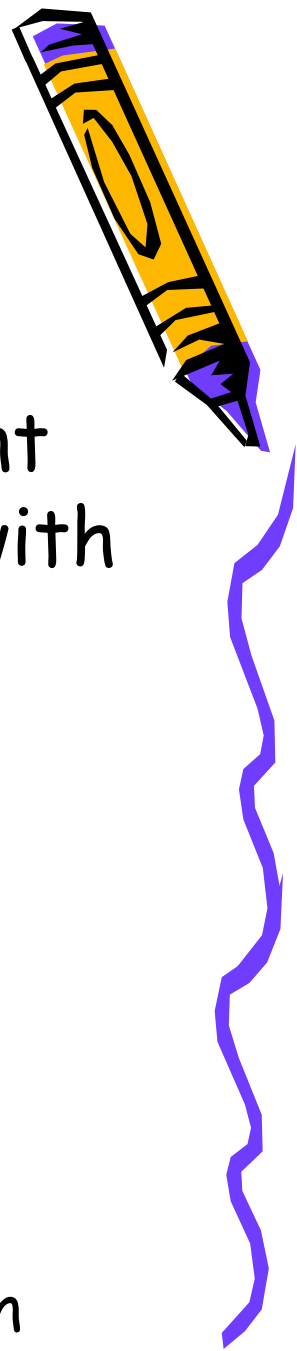
Parental Attitudes

Parents love their children, and if the teacher
"...feels this same love, then parents are
your friends. Show your interest in a child
and parents are on your side. Be casual, be
off-handed, be cold toward the child and
parents can never work closely with you...To
touch the child is to touch the parent. To
praise the child is to praise the parent. To
criticize the child is to hit at the parent. The
two are two, but the two are one."

Hymes, 1974 (pp. 8-9)



Parental Attitudes

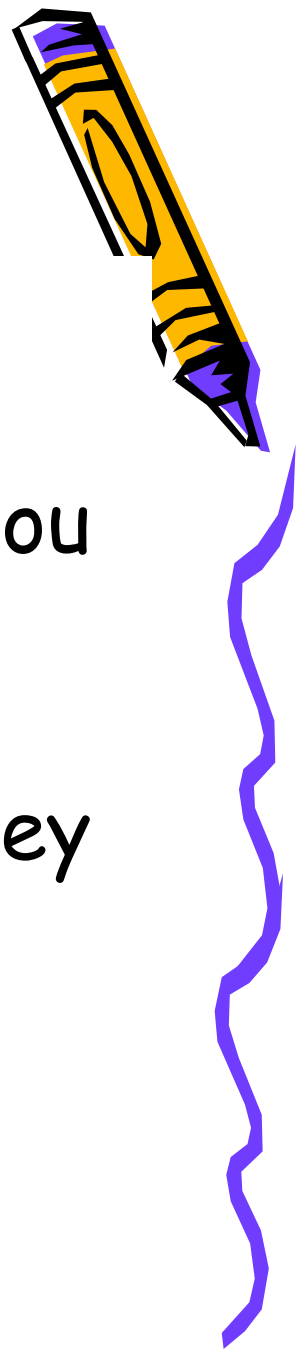


- Parents respond to school involvement based on their previous experience with school involvement and their current situation
 - Response types include parents who:
 - avoid schools like the plague
 - need encouragement to come to school
 - readily respond when invited to school
 - enjoy power and are overly active
 - are comfortable and enjoy involvement in school



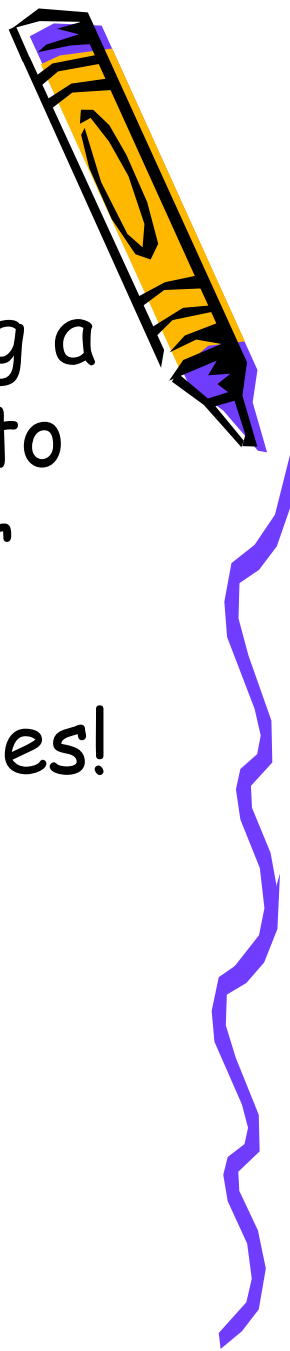
Welcome to School?

"Welcome to a new school year. We are excited that your child will be coming to our school. We ask that you drop her/him off quickly and quietly leave the building. Teachers do not have time to speak with you since they are preparing for their instructional time. We hope that everyone has a great school year, and we expect to see you at our first PTA meeting."

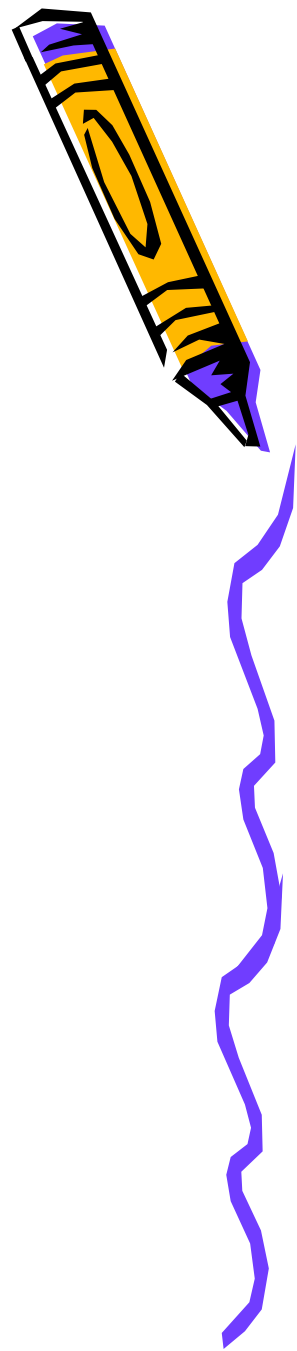


Welcome to School!

"Welcome, Bobcats! We are starting a new school year and we are thrilled to see everyone! Parents, we need your help - Please come by the office and sign up for our volunteer opportunities! We can't wait to work with you and your children!"



Roles in Parental Involvement

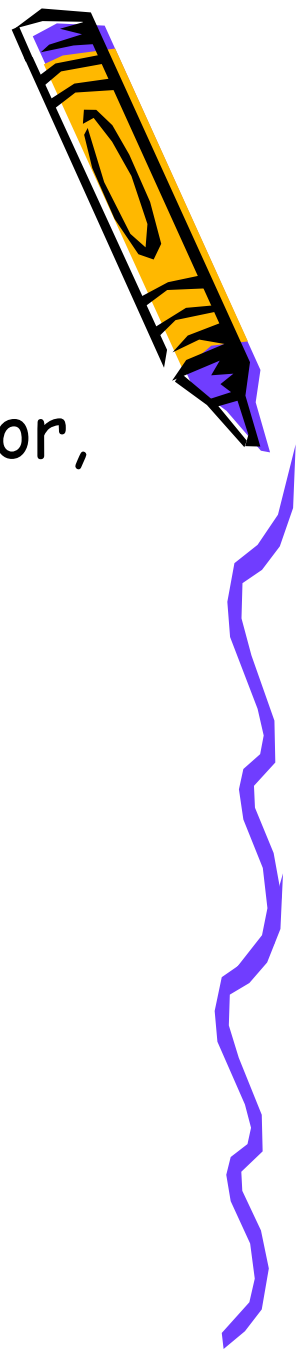


- Administrators Role:
 - Creates school atmosphere/spirit
 - Serves as program designer
 - Develops administrator-parent relationships
 - Serves as program coordinator
 - School leadership/management



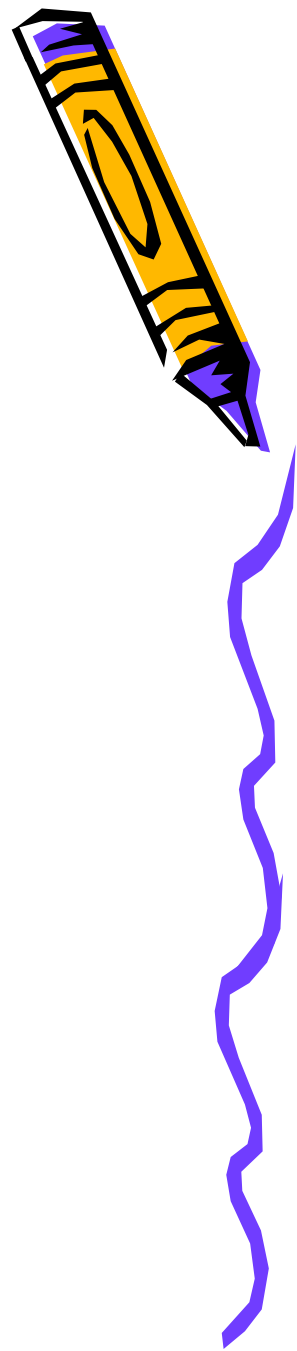
Roles in Parental Involvement

- Teacher's Role includes
 - facilitator, counselor, communicator, program director, interpreter, resource developer, and friend in addition to teacher
- Need to understand social inequities
 - to better reach/communicate with families
- Need to be aware of their own attitude toward parents

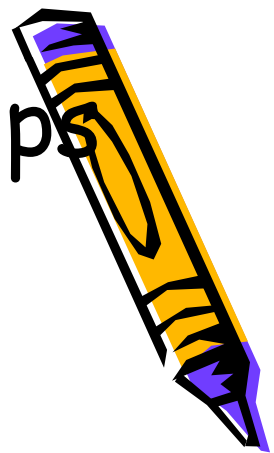


Roles in Parental Involvement

- Possible school roles for parents
 - Teachers
 - Spectators
 - Temporary volunteers
 - Volunteer resources
 - Employed resources
 - Policy makers



Ways to Enhance Relationships with Parents

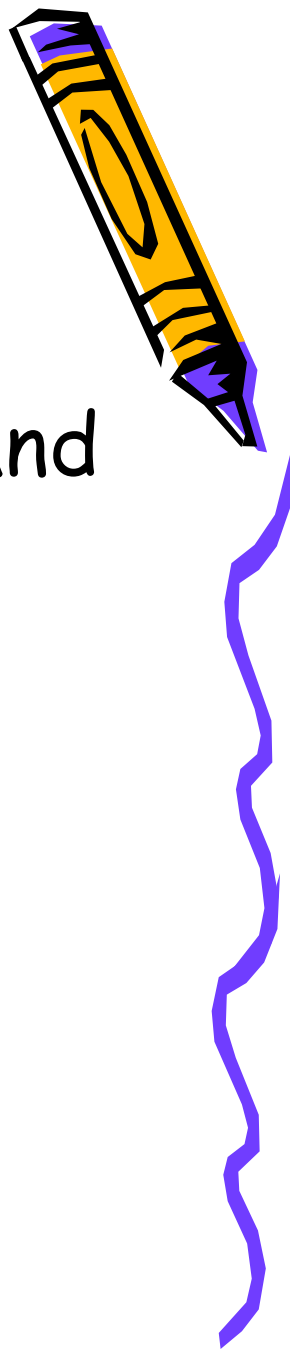


- Increased communications
 - Multiple methods of communication - notes, newsletters, website, workshops, etc.
- Open-Door Policy
- Parent Advisory Councils
- Home-School Continuity
- Family Center/Room within the school

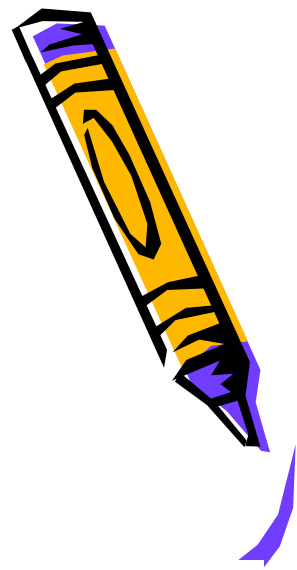


Ways to Enhance Relationships with Parents

- Encouraging involvement at home and engagement at school by parents
 - Involvement
 - Engagement
 - Empowerment

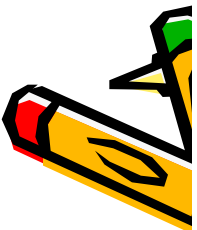


School Activities and Resources



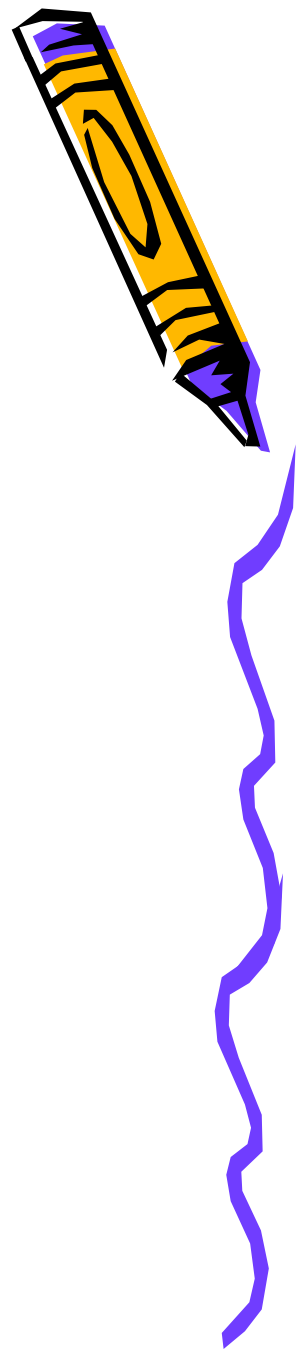
- Example activities and resources that encourage parent participation

- Back to School Night
- Shared Reading
- Parent Education Groups
- Parent Networks
- School-Home Activity Packets
- School Programs, Workshops, and Projects
- District/School Conferences
- PTA activities
- Fairs, Carnivals, and Suppers
- Book, Toy, clothing donations/exchanges
- Caring Card Exchanges
- Learning Centers
- Telephone Tutor
- Resources room
- Libraries: books, toys, DVDs, magazines
- Book Publishing
- Career Day
- Talent Sharing



Parent Education Groups

- Workshops
 - PACT classes
- Book Clubs
- Webinars



School-Home Activity Packets



1. School-home activity packets should emphasize developmentally appropriate practice for young children and play.
2. Activities should be interesting and enjoyable for the parent and child. Stress that the activities are to be enjoyed; if they cause stress rather than a positive interaction, do not insist that they be completed.
3. Make sure that the activity is culturally relevant for families (for examples, see Smith & Riojas- Cortez, 2010).
4. Send home clear instructions included in English and the children's native language; be available to answer questions by telephone or e-mail.
5. The packets should include any special materials needed to complete the activity. Activities that do not require materials are often more fun than those that do because there is no stress related to finding the materials.
6. Activities that do not require materials are often more fun than those that do because there is no stress related to finding the materials.
7. Ask parents to complete an evaluation form that is included with the instructions that is easy to follow and complete.
8. If the activity kit has permanent equipment, make sure that it is returned within a timely manner such as a week.



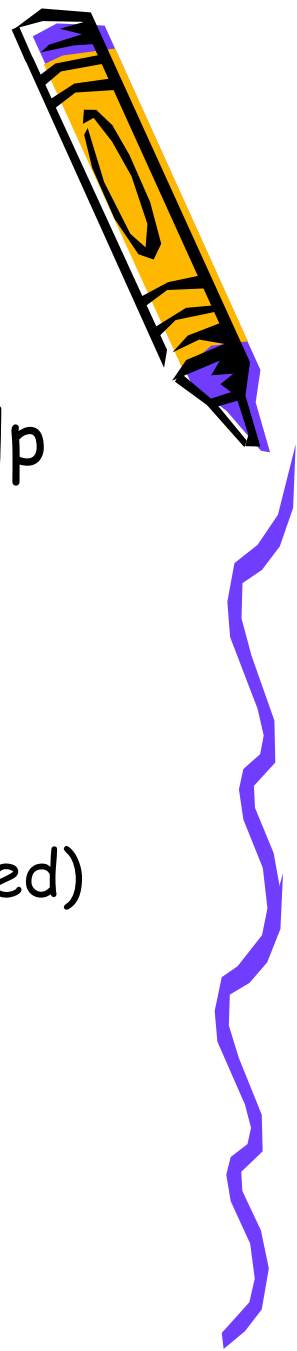
Teacher Communication



- Early communication is important in building a strong parental relationship
 - Before school starts or early in the year
 - Examples include:
 - Summer letters
 - Neighborhood visits
 - Block walks
 - Field trips
 - Picnics



What Schools Can Do

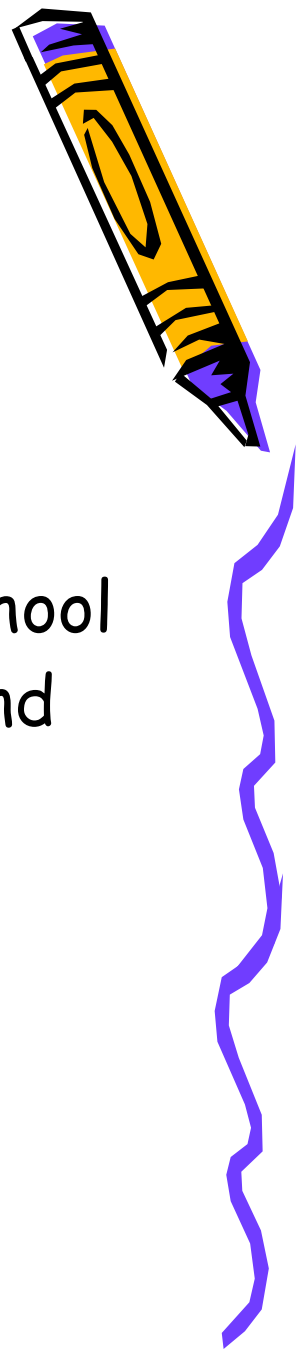


- There are many ways the school can help meet the needs of the school area
 - Worksite seminars
 - After-school activities
 - Skills training
 - Among the parents (PTA/ school group based)
 - Telephone Trees, Emails, Blogs, Chats
 - Transportation assistance
 - Parent to parent support
 - Child Care
 - Crisis Nursery

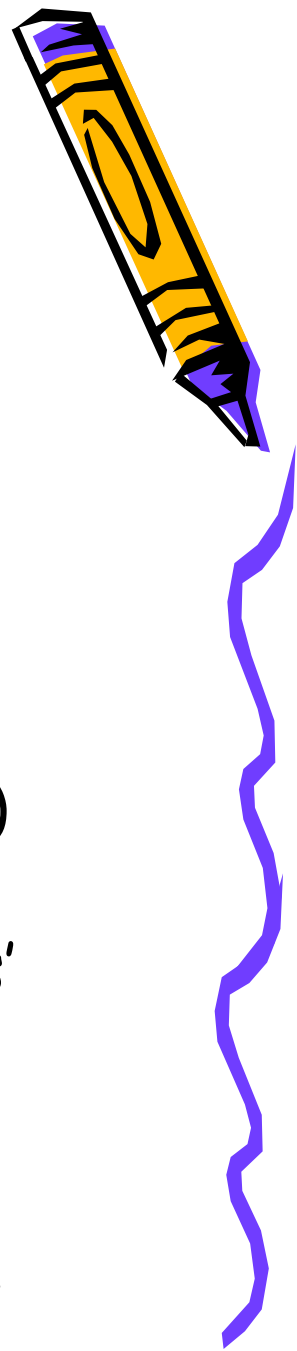


What Schools Can Do

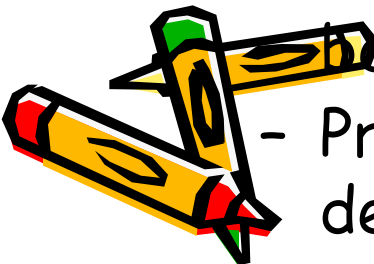
- Supporting families experiencing homelessness
 - Be accepting and value all children regardless of living conditions
 - Make it easy for a family to enroll in school
 - Provide free or reduced-priced meals and snacks without stereotyping recipients
 - Provide child-development centers for infants and toddlers.
 - Offer early childhood classes for preschoolers.



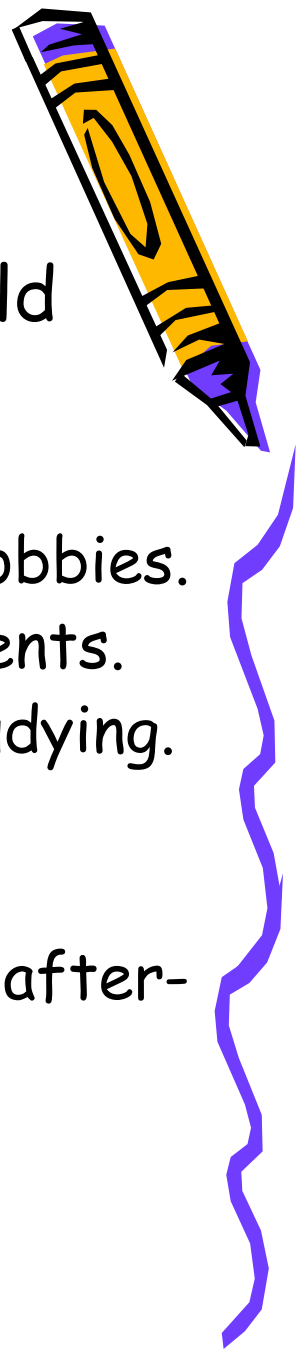
What Schools Can Do



- Supporting families experiencing homelessness (cont.)
 - Provide parent education and parent participation programs.
 - Provide English as a Second Language (ESL) courses.
 - Provide family literacy programs in families' native language.
 - Offer/find classes that can help parent become ready for employment.
 - Provide support meetings that help parents deal with depression and anxiety.



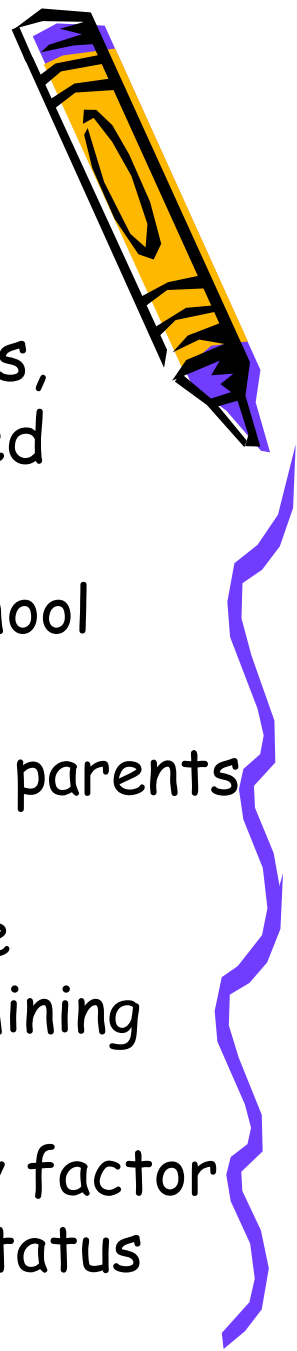
Parents as Partners



- Things parents can do to help their child succeed in school:
 - Read, talk, and listen to them
 - Tell them stories, play games, and share hobbies.
 - Discuss news, TV programs, and special events.
 - Provide books, supplies, and a place for studying.
 - Observe routine for meals, bedtime, and homework.
 - Monitor time spent watching TV and doing after-school jobs.
 - Discuss school events.
 - Help children meet deadlines.
 - Talk about school problems and successes.



Parents as Partners



Epstein (1996) - Center for Families, Schools, Community, and Children's Learning - selected research findings:

- Children do better and behave better in school when they have parent's help
- Teachers/Admins show greater respect for parents that participate in school activities
- The way teachers work with parents is more important than family background in determining students success
- Parental interest and support is the primary factor in determining success, not socioeconomic status



Building Family Strength



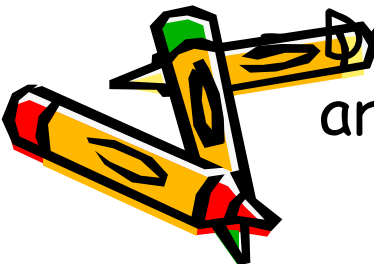
- Family strengths are their funds of knowledge
- Parents can focus on the following to keep their family strong
 - Communication
 - Appreciation
 - Commitment
 - Wellness
 - Time together
- Ability to deal with stress, conflict, and crisis



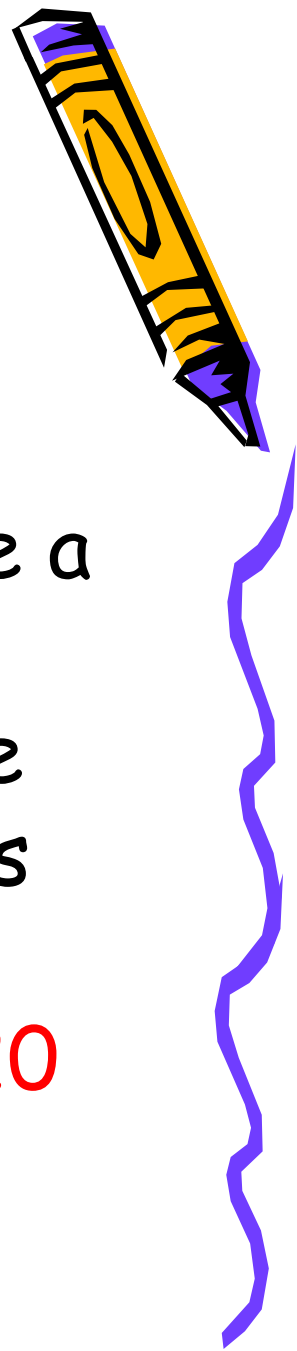
Parents as Volunteers



- Offering a variety of volunteering options will allow for more parent participation
 - Short/Long term, variety of times, activities
- Volunteer activities should be meaningful to be appreciated by parents.
- Ways to recruit:
 - Sign up sheets, invitations, announcements at other school functions
 - Describe positions so parents can choose an area based on their strengths and availability



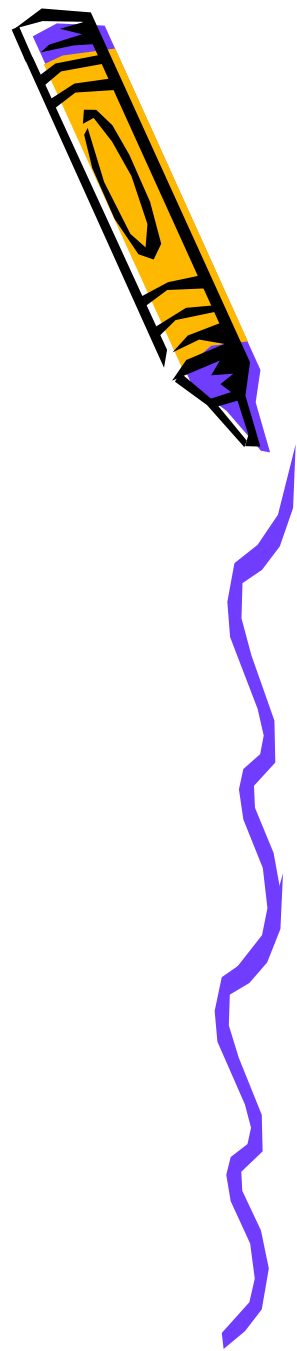
Your Assignment: Open House Plan



- Open House Plan: Open house is an opportunity for teachers to create a working relationship with families. Create activities for an open house that will include all family members interacting with the teacher and classroom. (15 points) **DUE: R 10/20**



Elements of a Successful Open House



- Personalized Invitations
- Creative Bulletin Board or Display
- Sign In System
 - Nametags, Sign-In Sheet, Welcome Packets
- Teacher Presentation
- Fun Activities



Teacher Presentation



- Tell a little about yourself.
- Give an overview of exciting events planned for the upcoming year.
- Share your daily schedule
 - Explain procedures, routines, subjects, etc...
- Spend a few minutes discussing assessment
- Review the behavior plan
 - Rules, rewards, and consequences

Answer parent questions

- Note cards or call out approach



Fun Activities



- Scavenger Hunt
 - Gingerbread Man
 - Lead back to child's desk with note from child to parent
- Parent Survey
 - Fun survey parents complete about their child and child grades it the next day
- Shared Journal Entry
 - T journal
 - Hardest Part or Best Part about Being a Kid
 - Hardest Part or Best Part about Being a Parent



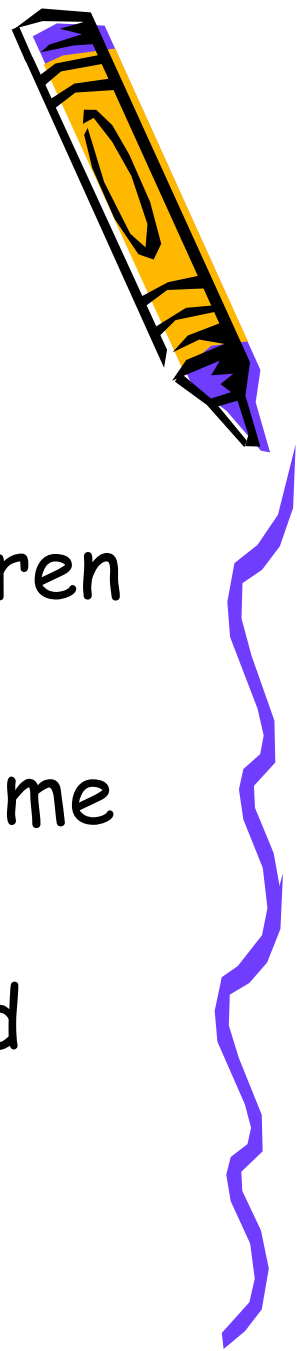
What Parents Really Want At Open House



- Clean, organized classroom that child takes ownership and pride
- A warm, caring, friendly teacher who welcomes them
- An informal, easy to understand presentation that makes sense



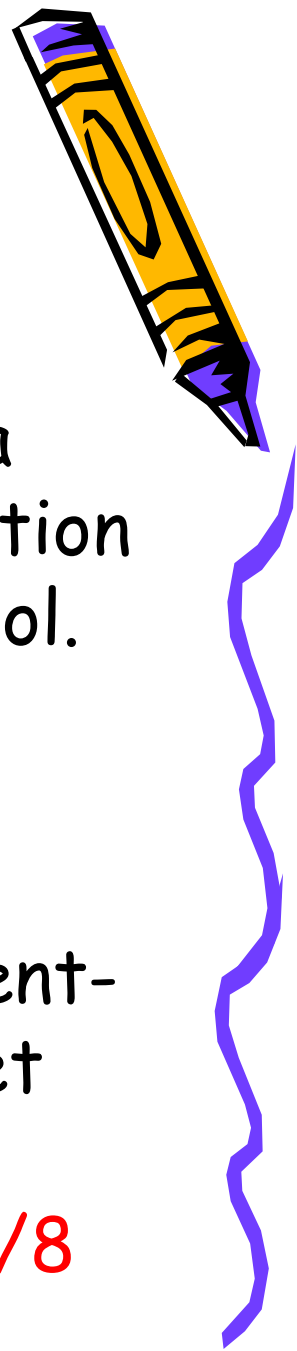
What Parents Really Want to Know



- Does this teacher like my child?
- Does the teacher care about children and enjoy teaching?
- Does the teacher want to support me and my child?
- Is the teacher going to be fair and easy to work with?



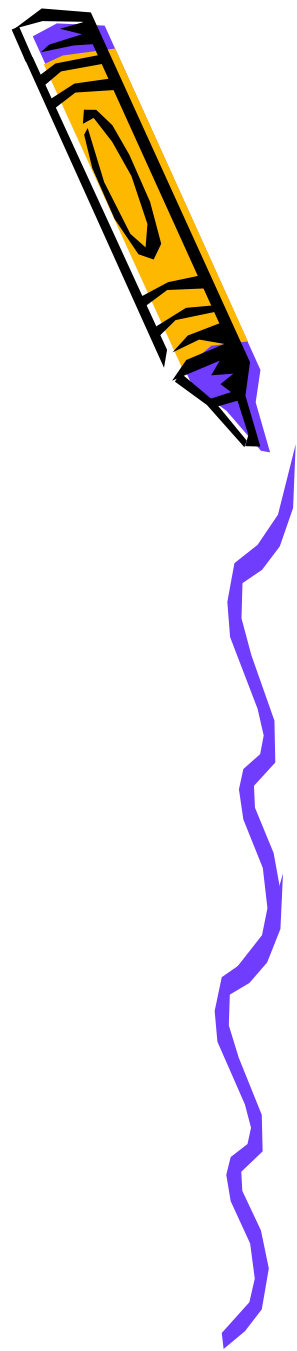
Your Assignment: Welcome Packet



- Welcome Packet: Students will create a packet of resources and useful information to give to parents the first day of school. The information should encourage and welcome parent involvement in the classroom, inform parents of classroom procedures, and initiate an ongoing parent-teacher relationship. Develop the packet for the age group you intend to teach after graduating. (20 points) **DUE: T 11/8 and W 11/9**



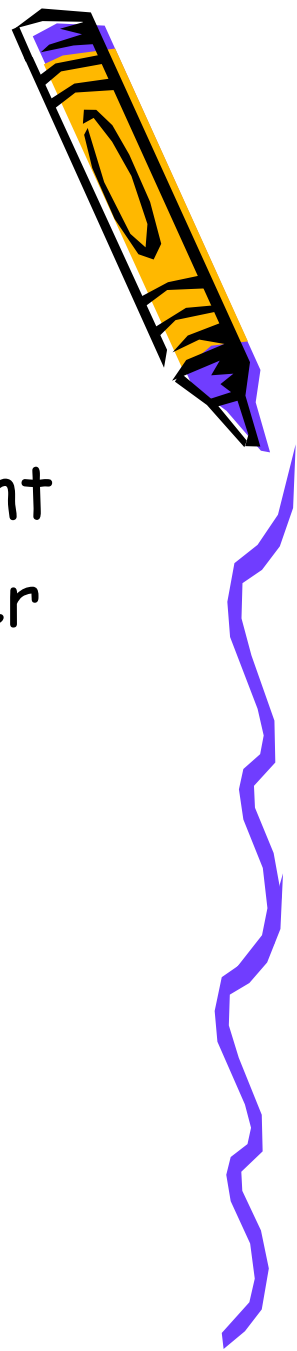
Elements of Welcome Packets



- Welcome Letter
 - Your contact information
 - School and/or class website
- Schedules
- Grading Policies
- Progress Reporting
- Behavior Plan
 - Rules
 - Rewards
 - Consequences
- Field Trips
- Parties and Birthdays
- Educational Articles



Forms to Return



- Parent's Note
 - Page for student information in the form of a letter to the teacher includes
 - Child's name
 - Goals (academic and social)
 - Special interests, talents, needs, etc...
 - Additional comments
 - Parent contact information
- Electronic Use Agreement
- Photo Agreement
- Parent Volunteer Lists

